



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 5, 2003

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MARVIN SMILON, HERBERT HADAD,
MICHAEL KULSTAD
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(718) 422-1870
(212) 637-2600

**LEADER OF CHINESE ROBBERY GANG ARRAIGNED ON FEDERAL CHARGES
INVOLVING OVER 20 ARMED ROBBERIES AROUND THE U.S.**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and PASQUALE D'AMURO, the Assistant Director in charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced today that WANG JIA FU, a/k/a "Ga Fook," the leader of a large Chinese robbery gang, was arraigned today in Manhattan Federal Court by United States District Judge DENNY CHIN. WANG JIA FU was detained without bail.

The 57-count Indictment, which names 15 defendants, including WANG JIA FU, charges that the defendants conspired to rob, and robbed at gunpoint, 24 different homes and businesses in New York City and at least five other states. The Indictment alleges specifically that the defendants committed a series of armed robberies in New York's Chinatown in 2000 and 2001. In particular, during the robbery of a business at 136-05 Sanford

Avenue, Queens, New York, which is charged in Counts 52 and 53 of the Indictment, a woman was shot in the head. In addition, according to the Indictment, various defendants traveled around the United States, including in New Jersey, Florida, Georgia, Arizona, and California to commit additional robberies. The charges in the Indictment represent the culmination of a three-year investigation by the FBI's Asian Organized Crime Task Force, which is made up of FBI agents and NYPD detectives.

To date, seven defendants, including WANG JIA FU, have been arrested on the Indictment. All were previously arraigned in Manhattan Federal Court, and have also been detained without bail. Besides WANG JIA FU, these defendants are JIN CHEN, SONG PING TIAN, CHEN CHAO, ZHOU ZI YI, CHEN FEN, and CHEN TENG. The remaining eight defendants charged in the Indictment remain fugitives.

The current Indictment follows the successful prosecution of six other members of JIA FU's robbery crew. On May 29, 2003, two of those individuals, CHEN XIANG and LIN XIAN WU, were convicted, after a two-week jury trial, before JUDGE RICHARD CONWAY CASEY, of robbing at gunpoint three businesses in New York's Chinatown. All three of the businesses also operated backroom gambling parlors. CHEN XIANG and LIN XIAN WU were also convicted of conspiring to commit, and committing, an armed extortion of a Chinese businessman.

The evidence at trial established that members of JIA FU's robbery gang deliberately targeted Chinese immigrants, particularly immigrants who ran illicit gambling parlors and brothels, in the hope that their victims would be unlikely to report the crimes to the police. The evidence at trial also established that the robbers' victims included young children and elderly people, who were routinely bound and often physically assaulted. In total, the evidence established, members of JIA FU's robbery crew stole hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and property during the course of their robberies.

The remaining four defendants indicted along with the two trial defendants - CHUN RONG CHEN, XIAO QIN ZHOU, LI XIN YE, and LI WEI - all pled guilty. On July 23, 2002, LI WEI was sentenced by JUDGE CASEY to 52 months' imprisonment. CHEN XIANG, LIN XIAN WU, CHUN RONG CHEN, XIAO QIN ZHOU, and LI XIN YE are awaiting sentencing.

If convicted, each defendant charged in the Indictment, and each defendant awaiting sentencing, faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for each count of robbery and each count of conspiracy to commit robbery. JIA FU is charged with directly participating in more than 16 armed robberies. In addition, each firearms offense carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Moreover, the first firearms conviction for any defendant carries a mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in prison, and each

additional firearms conviction carries a consecutive mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years in prison.

Mr. COMEY praised the investigative efforts of the FBI, the New York City Police Department, and all of the local law enforcement agencies throughout the country that assisted in the investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys PREET BHARARA and LESLIE BROWN are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

###